

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCCT-01 SY-04 USSS-00 OPR-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS VE

SUBJ: MASSIVE JAILBREAK BY DETAINED TERRORISTS; SERIOUS INTERNAL
SECURITY THREAT

1. THE VENEZUELAN MINISTRY OF DEFENSE ANNOUNCED JANUARY 19 THAT 23 PRISONERS ESCAPED FROM SAN CARLOS MILITARY PRISON IN DOWNTOWN CARACAS LATE THE PREVIOUS NIGHT. ALTHOUGH THE NAMES OF THE ESCAPEES WERE NOT GIVEN TO THE PRESS, IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THEY INCLUDE TWO TOP LEADERS OF THE "BANDERA ROJA" (BR) TERRORIST MOVEMENT, CARLOS BETANCOURT AND GABRIEL PUERTAS, AND "FUERZAS ARMADAS DE LIBERACION NACIONAL" (FALN) CHIEF FRANCISCO PRADA. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, THE GROUP OF ESCAPEES IS MADE UP OF 10 MEMBERS OF BR, 12 FROM FALN, AND 1 FROM THE "PUNTO CERO" TERRORIST ORGANIZATION. AMONG THE 23 WERE 2 WOMEN.

2. THE UNOFFICIAL LIST OF ESCAPEES IS AS FOLLOWS: BR MEMBERS -- CARLOS BETANCOURT, GABRIEL PUERTAS APONTE, ARGENIS BETANCOURT, JOSE AZDRUBAL GUZMAN, ALI TORRES DOMINGUEZ, RAFAEL ANTONIO UZCATEGUI, JESUS ARNALDO MARRERO ROMERO, PABLO HERNANDEZ PARRA, ROSA EMPERATRIZ CORDERO GUZMAN, BLANCO LUDINA AROCHA; FALN MEMBERS -- FRANCISCO PRADA BARAZARTE, RAMON MORALES ROSSI, WILLIAM JOSE ALVAREZ BLANCO, QUINTIN MOYA SANCHEZ, HECTOR VIVAS TORRES, PEDRO ALEJANDRO
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TRIANA ROJAS, ANTONIO CHAN LOPEZ, DIMAS PETIT VASQUEZ, MARCO

TULIO CROQUER, MARILU ROJAS, VICENTE CONTRERAS DUQUE, CARLOS
LEONARDO ARAQUE CARCAMO; AND PUNTO CERO MEMBER LEONARDO SOLORZANO
SERRANO.

3. THEIR ESCAPE WAS MADE VIA A 104 METER TUNNEL FROM INSIDE THE
PRISON TO A PRIVATE RESIDENCE EAST OF THE PRISON WALLS. APPARENTLY
THE ESCAPEES MADE THEIR WAY THROUGH THE TUNNEL WHILE THEIR GUARDS
WERE ENGROSSED IN A TELEVISED BASEBALL GAME. THE OCCUPANTS OF
THE RESIDENCE TOLD THE PRESS THEY HEARD A RUMBLING NOISE ABOUT
10 P.M. SHORTLY AFTERWARDS TWO ARMED MEN ENTERED THE HOUSE FROM
THE STREET AND HELPED EFFECT THE EXIT OF THE 23 FROM THE TUNNEL.
THE OCCUPANTS OF THE HOUSE, A LOCAL MUSICIAN AND HIS WIFE, HAVE
BEEN DETAINED FOR QUESTIONING. THE TUNNEL EMERGED IN A BEDROOM
THEY APPARENTLY HAD RENTED TO A YOUNG MAN A MONTH AGO WHO LEFT
"ON A TRIP" JANUARY 15.

4. SO FAR A COMBINED EFFORT BY THE MILITARY, POLICE AND INTELLIGENCE
SERVICE HAS FAILED TO LOCATE ANY OF THE ESCAPEES. ACCORDING TO
THE PRESS, BY LATE JANUARY 19 MORE THAN 200 PREMISES HAD BEEN
SEARCHED.

5. COMMENT: THE EXCAPE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN WELL PALNNED AND WELL
EXECUTED. THE FUGITIVES INCLUDE THE MOST DANGEROUS TERRORISTS
IN VENEZUELA, AND THEIR ESCAPE POSES A SERIOUS INTERNAL SECURITY
PROBLEM FOR THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT.
MCCLINTOCK

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